**In the Claims**

Claims are amended as follows:

1. (currently amended) A method ~~of generating an adaptive software interface for at least two networked entities, the method~~ comprising:

generating structured meta-data providing at least one semantic information element describing a characteristic of each of at least two networked entities ~~said entity~~;

collating the semantic information elements of each said entity where possible with corresponding semantic information elements of said at least one other entity; ~~and~~

analysing said collated semantic information elements to establish the extent to which the interface capabilities of said at least two networked entities are compatible; and

generating in accordance with said established compatibility an~~the~~ adaptive software interface for ~~the~~ said at least two networked entities.

2. (original) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of collating occurs dynamically during a preliminary exchange between the two entities prior to an interface being established between the two entities.

3. (original) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said structured meta-data includes associated meta-data for at least one said semantic information element.

4. (original) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the semantic information element describing the characteristics of said adaptive interface is provided in said meta-data in a form independent of the version of software used to generate said metadata.

5. (original) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said semantic information element is generated by a compiler receiving input data from an interface description and a code template.

6. (original) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said interface description includes a model of the data to be communicated across the interface and a code template.

7. (original) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said semantic information element provided by said meta-data has a form which can be mapped to an appropriate transport layer and exchanged between said networked entities prior to a higher level interface being established between said networked entities.

8. (currently amended) A method of determining at least one behavioural characteristic of a first entity in a relationship with at least one other entity comprising the steps of:

generating meta-data providing a structure containing at least one semantic information element describing a characteristic of an interface of the first entity;

generating meta-data providing a structure containing at least one semantic information element describing a characteristic of an interface of the at least one other entity;

collating the semantic information elements of the first entity with the semantic information elements of the at least one other entity;

analysing each pair of collated semantic information elements to determine at least one behavioural characteristic of the first entity in the relationship.

9. (original) A method as claimed in claim 8, wherein the meta-data structure is provided in a form suitable for indicating at least one semantic element taken from the group including: a description, a range, a default value.

10. (cancelled) ~~A method as claimed in claim 8, wherein in the step of generating meta-data for the first entity, the at least one characteristic is a characteristic of an interface of the entity, and wherein in the step of generating meta-data for the at least one other entity, the at least one characteristic is a characteristic of an interface of the at least one other entity.~~

11-17 (cancelled).

18. (original) A method of establishing a compatible interface between an initiator and a responder in the case where an interface of the initiator has at least one differing characteristic from an interface of the responder comprising the steps of

generating at least one meta-data structure providing at least one semantic information element for each entity, wherein each said semantic information element describes a characteristic of an interface capability of one of said entities;

collating said meta-data structures such that each semantic information element corresponding to the initiator's interface capability is collated with a corresponding semantic information element corresponding the responder's interface capability;

analysing the collated semantic information elements to determine the extent to which the initiator and the responder can generate a compatible interface;

establishing in accordance with said analysis an interface between said initiator and said responder.

19. (currently amended) A network management system comprising a <u>machine-readable storage medium</u> ~~computer program stored on a computer-readable medium~~ as claimed in claim 20.

20. (currently amended) A <u>machine-readable storage medium comprising a plurality of instructions</u> ~~program for a computer stored on a computer readable medium and~~ arranged to perform steps in a method of generating an adaptive software interface for at least two networked entities, the method comprising:

generating structured meta-data providing at least one semantic information element describing a characteristic of each said entity;

collating the semantic information elements of each said entity with those semantic information elements of said at least one other entity; and

analysing said collated semantic information elements to establish the extent to which the interface capabilities of said at least two networked entities are compatible and generating in accordance with said established compatibility the adaptive software interface for the two entities.

21. (cancelled).

22. (currently amended) A network including a computer system comprising a machine-readable storage medium ~~computer program stored on a computer-readable medium~~ as claimed in claim 20.

23-26. (cancelled)